

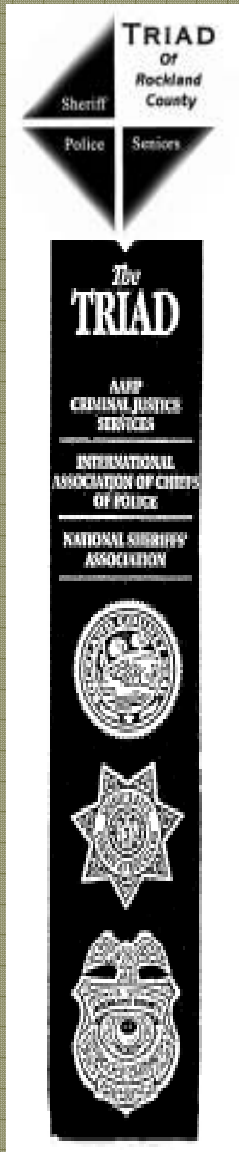
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Rockland County TRIAD Program

Reducing Crimes Against Seniors

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www.co.rockland.ny.us



THE GRANDPARENT SCAM

The elderly are particularly susceptible to scams and cons and new ones seem to pop up every day. The “Grandparent Scam” is specifically aimed at victimizing a senior citizen. The scammer, posing as a grandchild, randomly telephones a senior and unravels a tale of woe, claiming they are in trouble and need some money sent right away. Unfortunately, the internet provides many websites a thief can access to obtain information on anyone, including the elderly.

The phone rings and you answer. The conversation may go something like this:

Caller: “*Hi Grandpa, do you know who this is?*” The caller is fishing for information because he may or may not know the name of the supposed grandson.

Grandparent: Answers “*Is this Tom?*” Elderly person will respond, thinking it's one of their grandchildren.

Caller: “*Yes Grandpa – it's Tom and I'm in trouble*”. The scammer then spells out a bogus problem, saying he is away from home and in a serious fix, needing some money right away, “*and please don't tell my mom or dad.*” The caller may claim they are in jail for a minor offense and need bail money to get out, or, this con artist convinces the grandparent to drive to a Western Union and wire him \$550 so he could get his car out of the tow yard.

The grandparent obligingly wires a few hundred dollars or a provides a credit card number, thinking they're helping a grandchild.

Very few people will hang up on a caller posing as a family member. That is why this scam is effective and costly to the elderly.

What to do if you're approached in this manner

- If the person asks for money, be sure to confirm that it's really a relative – ask a question or two that only a relative would know the answer to.
- Go with your gut – if you don't feel comfortable with the situation, say no and hang up the telephone.
- The person that's calling you is attempting to commit a crime – REPORT IT TO THE POLICE.

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